

him my business, he candidly told me his, which was, to carry you to Alamance; and he is now waiting for you at the end of the lane."

Edith felt a new life swelling within her heart; but then came the sad reflection, "Alas! I shall not see *him*!" She half-trusted that he might yet be alive, and that he was at the head of the plans laid for her rescue. She enquired, therefore, eagerly for the names of the Alamancers.

"I asked them for their names," replied Flora, "and the leader said it might not be prudent. He called the black Ben—frequently quoted some one he calls Old Proximus, and told me to give you his respects *viva voce*."

"Ben Rust, as I live," shouted Edith, jumping up, and hurriedly assisting Nannie Scott.

"I had like to have forgotten a message the negro sent you," continued Flora McDonald, after a pause. "He desired me to say to you that it was all a lie about Master Henry's death, and——"

"Oh, God! I thank thee!" exclaimed Edith, and she swooned in the arms of her friends. Flora McDonald suspected a secret, but she said nothing. Edith, however, as soon as she could speak, threw her arms around the neck of her deliverer, and, kissing her fervently, said, "My more than mother, you shall see how happy you have made me. I will tell you what I never told mortal before, while I thought he was alive:" and hereupon she gave a brief sketch of her connection with Henry Warden. Flora shed tears, and, feeling herself more than paid, hastened her young friends to leave the house. It was now Nannie's turn to weep, and she lingered on the threshold, sobbing as if her heart would break. When they arrived at the place where they were expected, Rust shed the first tears that had moistened his eyes for years, and old black Ben blubbered like a child.

"Nannie Scott," said Flora, at length, "it is the last opportunity I shall have of giving you some token of the high esteem in which I have held your many virtues. Accept that horse which you rode, and keep him in remembrance of me."

The poor girl could say nothing; but Rust spoke for her, and declared that the animal should be called Flora McDonald till the day of his death, and that he should be buried with military honours. Ben then, forgetting his accustomed caution, proposed three cheers for Flora, and it was with much difficulty she could prevent him from carrying out his purpose. "Well, well, my beautiful Christin friend," said he, "when we git to Alamance, and the wars are over, I'll git the whole country together and give you three sich everlastin jovers as were never heern before."

Edith promised to write to Flora, and begged her to signify in what way she could show her unbounded gratitude.

"When I return home," said Flora, "I will let you know where to write, and would be glad to hear your future history. I believe—I almost know—you will be happy yet with him to whom you have been so devoted. I ask only that, when you are at home, and among your own people, you will act as a sister to Nannie Scott, remembering that you yourself were once a stranger among a strange people, and that you will sometimes remember and think kindly of Flora McDonald."

The Alamancers, with Nannie Scott, now left for home, Ben Rust thinking it prudent not now to divulge to Edith Mayfield the death of her father.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE COUNTRY INN.

WHEN the Alamancers, under the command of Captain Cornelius Demijohn parted from Henry Warden, they joined a company of Whigs, with whom they took part in the battle of King's Mountain. The master has much to say in regard to that engagement, and relates, with great minuteness, and in a lively style, some very entertaining and surprising incidents connected therewith. The course which our history has assumed compels us, with much reluctance, to pass over these events and proceed with those matters immediately connected with the persons whose destiny the reader is impatient to know. After the battle alluded to, Uncle Corny was no longer able to restrain his impatient desire to see the widow Powell, whose memory rendered sacred to him every foot of earth in South Carolina. The master, in compliance with a former promise, agreed to accompany his enamoured friend, and the Alamancers separated. As neither of the gentlemen was a cavalier, Corny and his friend were totally unsphered by being mounted, the former on a lean, draggle-tailed pony, whose back swayed beneath its ponderous weight as if it would break in the middle, while the latter received practical instruction in the original mode of churning butter on the back of a tall, gaunt, and hungry-looking animal.

The captain, with the wish of every lover for the annihilation of time and space, made frequent and furious digs at the flanks of his steed, his armed boot-heels clanging together under its weasel-shaped belly, and hurried on unmindful of the sufferings of M'Bride, whose old roan had a gait compounded of every possible motion except that of a direct horizontal progression. Nothing was said, Demijohn being